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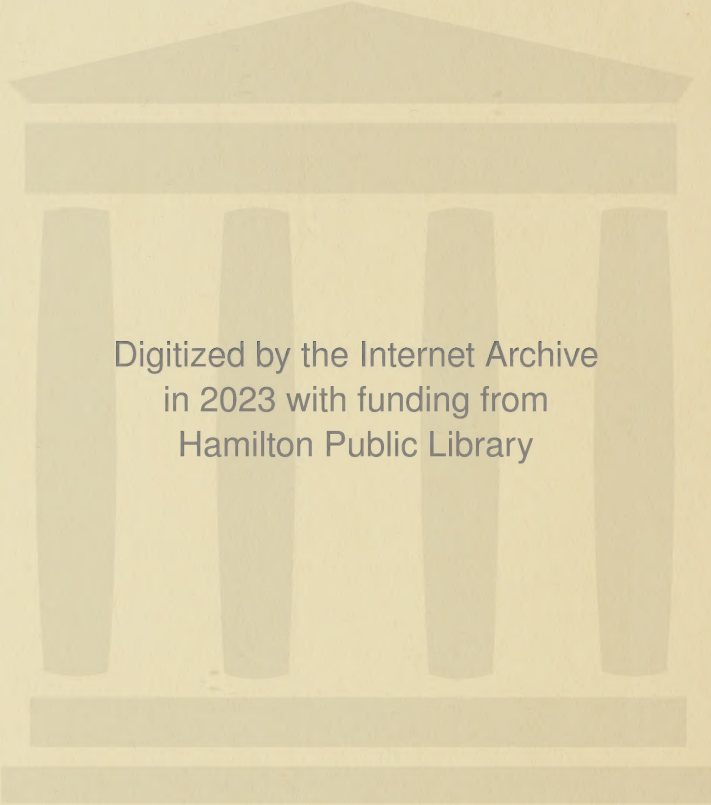












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**SPEECH**

OF THE

**HON. JOSIAH QUINCY,**

IN THE

*House of Representatives of the United States,*

DELIVERED THE

5TH JANUARY, 1813.

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*On the bill in addition to the act entitled "An act to raise an additional military force," and for other purposes.*

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1813.







Isaiah Thomas.

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Mr. SPEAKER.

I FEAR that the state of my health may prevent my doing justice to my sentiments concerning this bill. I will, however, make the attempt, though I should fail in it.

The bill proposes, that twenty thousand men should be added to the existing military establishment. This, at present, consists of thirty five thousand men. So that the effect of this bill is to place at the disposal of the executive an army of fifty five thousand. It is not pretended, that this addition is wanted, either for defence, or for the relief of the Indian frontier. On the contrary, it is expressly acknowledged, that the present establishment is sufficient for both of those objects. But the purpose, for which these twenty thousand men are demanded, is *the invasion of Canada*. This is unequivocally avowed by the chairman of the committee of foreign relations, (Mr. D. R. Williams) the organ, as is admitted, of the will and the wishes of the American cabinet.

The bill, therefore, brings, necessarily, into deliberation the conquest of Canada, either as an object, in itself, desirable, or consequentially advantageous, by its effect, in producing an early and honourable peace.

Before I enter upon the discussion of those topics, which naturally arise from this state of the subject, I will ask your indulgence, for one moment, while I make a few remarks upon this intention of the American cabinet, thus unequivocally avowed. I am induced to this from the knowledge, which I have, that this design is not deemed to be serious, by some men of both political parties; as well within this house, as out of it. I know that some of the friends of the present administration do consider the proposition, as a mere feint, made for the purpose of putting a good face upon things, and of strengthening the hope of a successful negotiation by exciting the apprehensions of the British cabinet for the fate of their colonies. I know, also, that some of those, who are opposed in political sentiment to the men, who are now at the head of affairs, laugh at these schemes of invasion; and deem them hardly worth controversy, on account of their opinion of the imbecility of the American cabinet, and the embarrassment of its resources.



I am anxious that no doubt should exist, upon this subject, either in the house, or in the nation. Whoever considers the object of this bill to be any other than that, which has been avowed, is mistaken. Whoever believes this bill to be a means of peace, or any thing else, than an instrument of vigorous and long-protracted war, is grievously deceived. And whoever acts under such mistake, or such deception, will have to lament one of the grossest, and, perhaps, one of the most critical errors, of his political life. I warn, therefore, my political opponents; those honest men, of which I know there are some, who, paying only a general attention to the course of public affairs, submit the guidance of their opinions to the men who stand at the helm, not to vote for this bill, under any belief that its object is to aid negociation for peace. Let such gentlemen recur to their past experience, on similar occasions. They will find that it has been always the case, whenever any obnoxious measure is about to be past, that its passage is assisted by some such collateral suggestions. No sooner do the cabinet perceive that any potion, which they intend to administer, is loathed by a considerable part of the majority, and that their apprehensions are alive, lest it should have a scowering effect upon their popularity, than certain under-operators are set to work, whose business it is to amuse the minds, and beguile the attention, of the patients, while the dose is swallowing. The language always is,—“Trust the cabinet Doctors. The medicine will not operate as you imagine, but quite another way.” After this manner the fears of men are allayed, and the purposes of the administration are attained, under suggestions, very different from the true motives. Thus the embargo, which has, since, been unequivocally acknowledged to have been intended to coerce Great Britain, was adopted, as the executive asserted, “to save our essential resources.” So also, when the present war was declared, against Great Britain, members of the house were known to state, that they voted for it, under the suggestion that it would not be a war of ten days; that it was known that Mr. Foster had instructions to make definitive arrangements, in his pocket; and that the United States had only to advance to the point of war, and the whole business would be settled. And now, an army, which, in point of numbers, Cromwell might envy, greater than that, with which Cæsar passed the Rubicon, is to be helped through a reluctant congress, under the suggestion of its being only a parade force, to make negociation successful; that it is the incipient state of a project for a grand pacification!

I warn also my political friends. These gentlemen are apt to place great reliance on their own intelligence and sagacity. Some of these will tell you, that the invasion of Canada is impossible. They ask where are the men,—where is the mo-



ney to be obtained? And they talk, very wisely, concerning common sense and common prudence, and will show, with much learning, how this attempt is an offence against both the one and the other. But, sir, it has been my lot, to be an observer of the character and conduct of the men, now in power, for these eight years past. And I state without hesitation, that no scheme ever was, or ever will be, rejected by them, merely on account of its running counter to the ordinary dictates of common sense and common prudence. On the contrary, on that very account, I believe it more likely to be both suggested and adopted by them. And, what may appear a paradox, for that very reason, the chance is rather increased, that it will be successful.

I could illustrate this position twenty ways. I shall content myself with remarking, only upon two instances, and those recent;—the present war; and the late invasion of Canada. When war against Great Britain was proposed, at the last session, there were thousands, in these United States, and I confess to you, I was, myself, among the number, who believed not one word of the matter. I put my trust in the old fashioned notions of common sense, and common prudence. That a people which had been more than twenty years at peace, should enter upon hostilities, against a people which had been twenty years at war; that a nation, whose army and navy were little more than nominal, should engage, in war, with a nation, possessing one of the best appointed armies and the most powerful marine, on the globe; that a country, to which neutrality had been a perpetual harvest, should throw that great blessing away, for a controversy, in which nothing was to be gained, and every thing valuable put in jeopardy; from these, and innumerable like considerations, the idea seemed so absurd, that I never once entertained it, as possible. And now, after war has been declared, the whole affair seems so extraordinary, and so utterly irreconcilable to any previous suggestions of wisdom and duty, that I know not what to make of it, or how to believe it. Even at this moment, my mind is very much in the state of certain Pennsylvanian Germans, of whom I have heard it asserted, that they are taught to believe, by their political leaders, and do, at this moment, consider the allegation, that war is at present existing, between the United States and Great Britain, to be a "*federal falsehood*."

It was just so with respect to the invasion of Canada. I heard of it last June. I laughed at the idea, as did multitudes of others, as an attempt too absurd for serious examination. I was in this case, again, beset by common sense and common prudence. That the United States should precipitate itself upon the unoffending people of that neighbouring colony, unmindful of all previously subsisting amities, because the parent state, three thousand miles distant, had



violated some of our commercial rights ; that we should march inland, to defend our ships and seamen ; that, with raw troops, hastily collected, miserably appointed, and destitute of discipline, we should invade a country, defended by veteran forces, at least equal, in point of numbers, to the invading army : that bounty should be offered, and proclamations issued, inviting the subjects of a foreign power to treason and rebellion, under the influences of a quarter of the country, upon which a retort of the same nature was so obvious, so easy, and in its consequences so awful ;—in every aspect, the design seemed so fraught with danger and disgrace, that it appeared absolutely impossible, that it should be seriously entertained. Those however, who reasoned after this manner, were, as the event proved, mistaken. The war was declared. Canada was invaded. We were in haste to plunge into these great difficulties, and we have now reason, as well as leisure enough, for regret and repentance.

The great mistake of all those, who reasoned concerning the war and the invasion of Canada, and concluded that it was impossible that either should be seriously intended, resulted from this, that they never took into consideration the connexion of both those events with the great election, for the chief magistracy, which was then pending. It never was sufficiently considered by them, that plunging into war with Great Britain, was among the conditions, on which support for the Presidency was made dependent. They did not understand, that an invasion of Canada, was to be, in truth, only a mode of carrying on an electioneering campaign. But since events have explained political purposes, there is no difficulty in seeing the connexions between projects and interests. It is, now, apparent to the most mole-sighted, how a nation may be disgraced, and yet a cabinet attain its desired honours. All is clear. A country may be ruined, in making an administration happy.

I said, Mr. Speaker, that such strange schemes, apparently irreconcilable to common sense and common prudence, were, on that very account, more likely to be successful. Sir, there is an audacity, which sometimes stands men in stead both of genius and strength. And, most assuredly, he is most likely to perform that, which no man ever did before, and will never be likely to do again, who has the boldness to undertake that, which no man ever thought of attempting, in time past, and no man will ever think of attempting, in time future. I would not, however, be understood as intimating, that this cabinet project of invasion is impracticable, either as it respects the collection of means and instruments, or in the ultimate result. On the contrary, sir, I deem both very feasible. Men may be obtained. For if forty dollars bounty cannot obtain them, an hundred dollars bounty may,



and the intention is, explicitly, avowed not to suffer the attainment of the desired army to be prevented by any vulgar notions of economy. Money may be obtained. What, by means of the increased popularity, derived from the augmentation of the navy, what, by opening subscription offices, in the interior of the country, what, by large premiums, the cupidity of the monied interest may be tempted, beyond the point of patriotic resistance, and all the attained means being diverted to the use of the army, pecuniary resources may be obtained, ample, at least, for the first year. And, sir, let an army of thirty thousand men be collected, let them be put under the command of a popular leader, let them be officered to suit his purposes, let them be flushed with victories, and see the fascinating career of military glory opening upon them, and they will not thereafter ever be deficient in resources. If they cannot obtain their pay by your votes, they will collect it by their own bayonets; and they will not rigidly observe any air-lines, or water-lines, in enforcing their necessary levies; nor be stayed by abstract speculations concerning right, or learned constitutional difficulties.

I desire, therefore, that it may be distinctly understood, both by this house and this nation, that it is my unequivocal belief, that the invasion of Canada, which is avowed, by the Cabinet, to be its purpose, is intended by it;—that continuance of the war and not peace is its project. Yes, sir, as the French Emperor said concerning ships and colonies, so our Cabinet, the friends of the French Emperor, may say, with respect to Canada and Halifax.—“THEY ENTER INTO THE SCOPE OF ITS POLICY.”

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Mr. Quincy was here called to order by Mr. Hall of Georgia, for intimating that the members of the Cabinet were friends of the French Emperor.

Mr. Quincy said, that he understood that the relations of amity did subsist between this country and France, and that, in such a state of things, he had a right to speak of the American Cabinet, as the friends of France, in the same manner as he had now a right to call them, the enemies of Great Britain.

The Speaker said, that the relations of amity certainly did subsist between this country and France, and that he did not conceive the gentleman from Massachusetts to be out of order in his expressions. That it was impossible to prevent gentlemen from expressing themselves, so as to convey an *innuendo*.

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Mr. Quincy proceeded.—If, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia, and his political friends, would take one thing into consideration, he, and they, will have no reason to complain, in case the cabinet be of that immaculate nature, he supposes. No administration, no man, was ever materially injured by any mere “*innuendo*.” The strength of satire is



the justness of the remark, and the only sting of invective, is the truth of the observation.

I will now proceed to discuss those topics, which naturally arise out the bill, under consideration, and examine the proposed invasion of Canada, at three different points of view.

1. As a means of carrying on the subsisting war.
2. As a means of obtaining an early and honourable peace.
3. As a means of advancing the personal and local projects of ambition of the members of the American cabinet.

Concerning the invasion of Canada, as a means of carrying on the subsisting war, it is my duty to speak plainly and decidedly, not only because I herein express my own opinions upon the subject, but, as I conscientiously believe, the sentiments also of a very great majority of that whole section of country, in which I have the happiness to reside. *I say, then, sir, that I consider the invasion of Canada, as a means of carrying on this war, as, cruel,—wanton,—senseless,—and wicked.*

You will easily understand, Mr. Speaker, by this very statement of opinion, that I am not one of that class of politicians, which has for so many years predominated in the world, on both sides of the Atlantic. You will readily believe, that I am not one of those, who worship in that temple, where Condorcet is the high priest and Machiavel the God. With such politicians, the end always sanctifies the means ;—the least possible good to themselves, perfectly justifies, according to their creed, the inflicting the greatest possible evil upon others. In the judgment of such men, if a corrupt ministry, at three thousand miles distance, shall have done them an injury, it is an ample cause to visit with desolation a peaceable and unoffending race of men, their neighbours, who happen to be associated with that ministry by ties of mere political dependence. What though these colonies be so remote from the sphere of the questions in controversy, that their ruin, or prosperity, could have no possible influence upon the result ? What though their cities offer no plunder ? What though their conquest can yield no glory ? In their ruin, there is revenge. And revenge, to such politicians, is the sweetest of all morsels. With such men, neither I, nor the people of that section of country, in which I reside, hold any communion. There is, between us and them, no one principle of sympathy, either in motive, or action.

That wise, moral, reflecting people, which constitute the great mass of the population of Massachusetts, indeed of all New-England, look for the sources of their political duties no where else, than in those fountains, from which spring their moral duties. According to their estimate of human life and its obligations, both political and moral duties emanate from the nature of things, and from the essential and eternal relations, which subsist among them. True it is, that a state of war gives



the right to seize and appropriate the property and territories of an enemy. True it is, that the colonies of a foreign power are viewed, according to the law of nations, in the light of its property. But in estimating the propriety of carrying desolation, into the peaceful abodes of their neighbours, the people of New-England will not limit their contemplation to the mere circumstance of abstract right, nor ask what lawyers and jurists have written, or said, as if this was conclusive upon the subject. That people are much addicted to think for themselves; and in canvassing the propriety of such an invasion, they will consider the actual condition of those colonies, their natural relations to us, and the effect, which their conquest and ruin will have, not only upon the people of those colonies, but upon themselves, and their own liberties and constitution. Above all, what I know will seem strange to some of those who hear me, they will not forget to apply to a case, occurring between nations, as far as is practicable, that heaven-descended rule, which the great author and founder of their religion has given them, for the regulation of their conduct towards each other. They will consider it the duty of these United States, to act towards those colonies, as they would wish those colonies to act, in exchange of circumstances, towards these United States.

The actual condition of those colonies, and the relation, in which they stood to the United States, antecedent to the declaration of war, were of this nature. Those colonies had no connexion with the questions, in dispute, between us and their parent state. They had done us no injury. They meditated none to us. Between the inhabitants of those colonies and the citizens of the United States, the most friendly, and mutually useful, intercourse subsisted. The borderers, on this, and those on the other side of the St. Lawrence, and of the boundary line, scarcely realized that they were subjects of different governments. They interchanged expressions and acts of civility. Intermarriages took place among them. The Canadian sometimes settled in the United States. Sometimes our citizens emigrated to Canada. After the declaration of war, had they any disposition to assail us? We have the reverse, expressly, in evidence. They desired nothing so much as to keep perfect the then subsisting relations of amity. Would the conquest of those colonies shake the policy of the British cabinet? No man has shewn it. Unqualified assertions, it is true, have been made, but totally unsupported by any evidence, or even the pretence of argument. On the contrary, nothing was more obvious than that an invasion of Canada must strengthen the ministry of Great Britain, by the excitement and sympathy, which would be occasioned, in the people of that country, in consequence of the sufferings of the innocent inhabitants of those colonies, on account of a dispute, in which they had no concern, and of which they had scarcely a knowledge. All this was anticipated. All this was frequently urged to this house, at the last and preced-

ing sessions, as the necessary effect of such a measure. The event has justified those predictions. The late elections in G. Britain, have terminated in the complete triumph of the friends of the British ministry. In effecting this change, the conduct of these United States, in relation to Canada, has had, undeniably, a mighty influence, by the disgust and indignation, felt by the British people, at a step so apparently wanton and cruel.

As there was no direct advantage to be hoped, from the conquest of Canada, so also there was none incidental. Plunder there was none. At least none, which would pay the cost of the conquest. Glory there was none. Could seven millions of people obtain glory, by precipitating themselves upon half a million and trampling them into the dust? A giant obtain glory, by crushing a pigmy! That giant must have a pigmy's spirit, who could reap, or hope, glory from such an achievement.

Surely a people, with whom we were connected by so many natural and adventitious ties, had some claims upon our humanity. Surely, if our duty required that they and theirs should be sacrificed to our interests, or our passions, some regret mingled in the execution of the purpose. We postponed the decree of ruin, until the last moment. We hesitated—we delayed, until longer delay was dangerous. Alas! Sir, there was nothing of this kind, or character, in the conduct of the cabinet. The war had not yet been declared, when Gen. Hull had his instructions to put in train the work of destruction. There was an eagerness for the blood of the Canadians, a headlong precipitation for their ruin, which indicated any thing else, rather than feelings of humanity, or visitings of nature, on account of their condition. Our armies were on their march for their frontier, while yet peace existed between this country and the parent state; and the invasion was obstinately pursued, after a knowledge that the chief ground of controversy was settled, by the abandonment of the British orders in council; and after nothing remained but a stale ground of dispute, which, however important in itself, was of a nature, for which no man has ever yet pretended, that for it alone war would have been declared. Did ever one government exhibit, towards any people, a more bloody and relentless spirit of rancour? Tell not me of petty advantages, of remote and possibly useful contingencies, which might arise from the devastation of those colonies. Show any advantage, which justifies that dreadful phial of wrath, which, if the intention of the American cabinet had been fulfilled, would, at this day, have been poured out upon the heads of the Canadians. It is not owing to the tender mercies of the American administration, if the bones of the Canadians are not, at this hour, mingled with the ashes of their habitations. It is easy enough to make an excuse for any purpose. When a victim is destined to be immolated, every hedge presents sticks for the sacrifice. The lamb, who stands at the mouth of the stream, will always trouble the water, if you take the account of the wolf, who stands at the source of



it. But show a good to us, bearing any proportion to the multiplied evils, proposed to be visited upon them. There is none. Never was there an invasion of any country worse than this, in point of moral principle, since the invasion of the West Indies by the Buccaneers, or that of these United States by captain Kidd. Indeed both Kidd and the Buccaneers had more apology, for their deed, than the American cabinet. They had at least the hope of plunder. But, in this case, there is not even the poor refuge of cupidity. We have heard great lamentations about the disgrace of our arms, on the frontier. Why, sir, the disgrace of our arms, on the frontier, is terrestrial glory, in comparison with the disgrace of the attempt. The whole atmosphere rings with the utterance, from the other side of the house, of this word—"glory,"—"glory," in connection with this invasion. What glory? Is it the glory of the tiger, which lifts his jaws, all foul and bloody, from the bowels of his victim, and roars for his companions of the woods to come and witness his prowess and his spoils? Such is the glory of Gingham Khan and of Bonaparte. Be such glory far, very far from my country. Never,—never,—may it be accursed with such fame.

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
 "Nor in the glistening foil  
 "Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,  
 "But lives and spreads aloft, by those pure eyes  
 "And perfect witness of all-judging Jove,  
 "As he pronounces lastly on each deed."

.....

May such fame as this be my country's meed.

But the wise and thoughtful people of our northern section will not confine their reflections to the duties, which result from the actual condition of those colonies, and their general relations to the United States, they will weigh the duties the people of the United States owe to themselves, and contemplate the effect, which the subjugation of those Canadians will have upon our own liberties and constitution. Sir, it requires but little experience in the nature of the human character, and but a very limited acquaintance with the history of man, to be satisfied that, with the conquest of the Canadas, the liberties and constitution of this country perish.

Of all nations in the world, this nation is the last, which ought to admit among its purposes the design of foreign conquests. States, such as are these, connected by ties, so peculiar; into whose combination there enters, necessarily, numerous jealousies and fears; whose interests are not always reconcilable, and the passions, education and character of whose people, on many accounts, are repugnant to each other; with a constitution made merely for defence;—it is impossible, that an association of independent sovereignties, standing in such relations to each other, should not have the principles of its union, and the hopes of its constitution materially affected, by the collection of a large military force, and its employment in the subjugation of neigh-

bouring territories. It is easy to see, that an army, collected in such a state of society, as that which exists in this country, where wages are high, and subsistence easily to be obtained, must be composed, so far as respects the soldiery, for the most part of the refuse of the country ; and, as it respects the officers, with some honourable exceptions indeed, must consist, in a considerable degree, of men, desperate, sometimes, in fortune, at others, in reputation ; " choice spirits ;" men " tired of the dull pursuits of civil life," who have not virtue, or talents, to rise in a calm and settled state of things, and who, all other means of advancement or support wanting, or failing, take to the sword. A body of thirty, or fifty thousand, such men, combined, armed, and under a popular leader, is a very formidable force. They want only discipline and service, to make them veterans. Opportunity to acquire these, Canada will afford. The army, which advances to the walls of Quebec, in the present condition of Canadian preparation, must be veteran. And a veteran army, under a popular leader, flushed with victory, each individual realizing, that while the body remains combined, he may be something, and, possibly, very great, that if dissolved, he sinks into insignificance, will not be disbanded by vote. They will consult with one another, and with their beloved chieftain, upon this subject ; and not trouble themselves about the advice of the old people, who are knitting and weaving, in the chimney corners, at Washington. Let the American people receive this as an undoubted truth, which experience will verify.—*Whoever plants the American standard on the walls of Quebec, conquers it for himself, and not for the people of these United States.* Whoever lives to see that event,—may my head be low in the dust before it happen !—will witness a dynasty established, in that country, by the sword. He will see a King, or an Emperor, dukedoms, and earldoms, and baronies distributed to the officers, and knights' fees bestowed on the soldiery. Such an army will not trouble itself about geographical lines, in portioning out the divisions of its new empire ; and will run the parallels of its power by other steel than that of the compass. When that event happens, the people of New England, if they mean to be free, must have a force equal to defend themselves against such an army. And a military force, equal to this object, will itself be able to enslave the country.

Mr. Speaker, when I contemplate the character and consequences of this invasion of Canada, when I reflect upon its criminality and its danger to the peace and liberty of this, once happy, country, I thank the great author and source of all virtue, that, through his grace, that section of country, in which I have the happiness to reside, is, in so great a degree, free from the iniquity of this transgression. I speak it with pride, the people of that section have done what they could, to vindicate themselves and their children from the burden of this sin.



That whole section has risen, almost as one man, for the purpose of driving from power, by one great constitutional effort, the guilty authors of this war. If they have failed, it has been, not through the want of will, or of exertion, but in consequence of the weakness of their political power. When in the usual course of divine providence, who punishes nations, as well as individuals, his destroying angel shall, on this account, pass over this country, and sooner, or later, pass, it will,—I may be permitted to hope, that over New-England his hand will be stayed. Our souls are not steeped in the blood, which has been shed in this war. The spirits of the unhappy men, who have been sent to an untimely audit, have borne to the bar of divine justice no accusations against us.

This opinion, concerning the principle of this invasion of Canada, is not peculiar to me. Multitudes, who approve the war, detest it. I believe this sentiment is entertained, without distinction of parties, by almost all the moral sense, and nine tenths of the intelligence, of the whole northern section of the United States. I know that men from that quarter of the country will tell you differently. Stories of a very different kind are brought by all those, who come trooping to Washington for place, appointments and emoluments; men, who will say any thing to please the ear, or do any thing to please the eye of Majesty, for the sake of those fat contracts and gifts which it scatters; men, whose fathers, brothers, and cousins are provided for by the departments; whose full grown children are at suck at the money-distilling breasts of the treasury; the little men, who sigh after great offices; those who have judgeships in hand, or judgeships in promise; toads, that live upon the vapour of the palace; that swallow great men's spittle at the levees; that stare and wonder at all the fine sights, which they see there, and most of all wonder at themselves,—how they got there to see them. These men will tell you, that New-England applauds this invasion.

But, Mr. Speaker, look at the elections. What is the language they speak? The present tenant of the chief magistracy rejected, by that whole section of country, with the exception of a single state, unanimously. And for whom? In favour of a man, out of the circle of his own state, without much influence, and personally almost unknown; in favour of a man, against whom the prevailing influences in New-England, had previously strong political prejudices, and with whom, at the time of giving him their support, they had no political understanding; in favour of a man, whose merits, whatever in other respects they might be, were brought into notice, in the first instance, chiefly, so far as that election was concerned, by their opinion of the utter want of merit of the man, whose re-election they opposed.

Among the causes of that universal disgust, which pervaded all New-England, at the administration and its supporters, was the general dislike and contempt of this invasion of Canada. I have taken some pains to learn the sentiments, which prevail, on

this subject, in New-England, and particularly among its yeomanry, the pride and the hope of that country. I have conversed with men, resting on their spades and leaning on the handles of their ploughs, while they relaxed for a moment, from the labour, by which they support their families, and which gives such a hardihood and character to their virtues. They asked——  
 “What do we want of Canada? We have land enough. Do we want plunder? There is not enough of that, to pay cost of getting it. Are our ocean rights there? Or is it there our seamen are held in captivity? Are new states desired? We have plenty of those already. Are they to be held as conquered territories? This will require an army there. Then to be safe, we must have an army here. And, with a standing army, what security for our liberties?”

These are no fictitious reasonings. They are the suggestions, I doubt not, of thousands and tens of thousands of our hardy New England yeomanry;—men, who, when their country calls, at any wise and real exigency, will start from their native soils and throw their shields over their liberties, like the soldiers of Cadmus, “armed in complete steel;” yet men, who have heard the winding of your horn to the Canada campaign, with the same apathy and indifference, with which they would hear, in the streets, the trilling of a jews-harp, or the twirring of a bandjoe.

The plain truth is, that the people of New England have no desire for Canada. Their moral sentiment does not justify, and they will not countenance, its invasion. I have thus stated the grounds, on which they deem, and I have felt myself bound to maintain, that this contemplated invasion of that territory is, as it respects the Canadians, *wanton and cruel*; because it inflicts the greatest imaginable evils on them, without any imaginable benefit to us; that, as it respects the United States, such an invasion is *senseless*, because, ultimately, ruinous to our own political safety; and *wicked*, because it is an abuse of the blessings of divine providence, and a manifest perversion of his multiplied bounties, to the purpose of desolating an innocent and unoffending people.

I shall now proceed to the next view I proposed to take of this project of invading Canada, and consider it in the light of *a means to obtain an early and honourable peace*. It is said, and this is the whole argument, in favour of this invasion, in this aspect, that the only way to negotiate successfully with Great Britain, is to appeal to her fears, and raise her terrors, for the fate of her colonies. I shall, here, say nothing concerning the difficulties of executing this scheme; nor about the possibility of a deficiency, both in men and money. I will not dwell on the disgust of all New England; nor on the influence of this disgust, with respect to your efforts. I will admit, for the present, that an army may be raised; and that, during the first years, it may be supported by loans, and that afterwards, it will support



itself by bayonets. I will admit, farther, for the sake of argument, that success is possible, and that Great Britain realizes the practicability of it. Now, all this being admitted, I maintain that the surest of all possible ways to defeat any hope, from negotiation, is the threat of such an invasion, and an active preparation to execute it. Those must be very young politicians, their pin-feathers not yet grown, and, however they may flutter on this floor, they are not yet fledged for any high, or distant flight, who think that threats and appealing to fear are the ways of producing a disposition to negotiate, in Great Britain, or in any other nation, which understands what it owes to its own safety and honour. No nation can yield to threat, what it might yield to a sense of interest; because, in that case, it has no credit for what it grants, and what is more, loses something in point of reputation from the imbecility, which concessions made under such circumstances indicate. Of all nations in the world, Great Britain is the last to yield to considerations of fear and terror. The whole history of the British nation is one tissue of facts, tending to show the spirit, with which she meets all attempts to bully and brow-beat her into measures, inconsistent with her interests, or her policy. No nation ever before made such sacrifices of the present to the future. No nation ever built her greatness, more systematically, on the principle of a haughty self respect, which yields nothing to suggestions of danger, and which never permits either her ability or inclination to maintain her rights, to be suspected. In all negotiations, therefore, with that power, it may be taken as a certain truth, that your chance of failure is just in proportion to the publicity and obtrusiveness of threats and appeals to fear.

The American cabinet understand all this very well, although this house may not. Their policy is founded upon it. The project of this bill is to put at a still further distance the chance of amicable arrangement, in consequence of the dispositions which the threat of invasion of their colonies, and attempt to execute it, will excite in the British nation and ministry. I have some claim to speak concerning the policy of the men, who constitute the American cabinet. For eight years I have studied their history, characters and interests. I know no reasons, why I should judge them severely, except such as arise from those inevitable conclusions, which avowed principles and distinct conduct have impressed upon the mind. I say then, sir, without hesitation, that, in my judgment, the embarrassment of our relations with Great Britain, and keeping alive, between this country and that, a root of bitterness, has been, is, and will continue to be, a main principle of the policy of this American cabinet. They want not a solid settlement of our differences. If the nation will support them in it, they will persevere in the present war. If it will not, some general arrangements will be the resort, which will leave open opportunities for discord, which, on proper occasions, will be improved by them. I shall give my reasons for this opinion. I wish no sentiments of

mine to have influence any farther, than the reasons, upon which they are founded, justify. They are public reasons, arising from undeniable facts. The nation will judge for itself.

The men who now, and who, for these twelve years past, have, to the misfortune of this country, guided its councils, and directed its destinies, came into power on a tide, which was raised and supported by elements, constituted of British prejudices, and British antipathies. The parties, which grew up in this nation, took their origin and form at the time of the adoption of the treaty, negotiated by Mr Jay, in 1794. The opposition of that day, of which the men now in power were the leaders, availed themselves, very dexterously, of the relics of that hatred towards the British name, which remained after the revolutionary war. By perpetually blowing upon the embers of the antient passions, they excited a flame in the nation, and by systematically directing it against the honorable men, who at that time conducted its affairs, the strength and influence of those men were impaired. The embarrassments with France, which succeeded, in 1798 and 1799, were turned to the same account. Unfortunately those, who then conducted public affairs, attended less to the appearances of things, than to their natures; and considered more what was due to their country, than was prudent in the state of the prejudices and jealousies of the people, thus artfully excited against them. They went on, in the course they deemed right, regardless of personal consequences, and blind to the evidences of discontent, which surrounded them. The consequences are well known. The supreme power, in these United States, passed into the hands which now possess it, in which it has been continued down to the present time. This transfer of power was effected, undeniably, principally on the very ground of these prejudices and antipathies, which existed in the nation against Great Britain, and which had been artfully fomented by the men now in power, and their adherents, and directed against their predecessors. These prejudices and passions constitute the main pillar of the power of these men. In my opinion, they never will permit it to be wholly taken away from them. They never will permit the people of this country to look at them and their political opponents, free of that jaundice, with which they have carefully imbued the vision of their own partizans. They never will consent to be weighed, in a balance of mere merits, but will always take care to keep in reserve some portion of these British antipathies, to throw as a make-weight into the opposite scale, whenever they find their own sinking. To continue, multiply, strengthen and extend, these props of their power, has been and still is the object of the daily study, and the nightly vigils of our American cabinet. For this, the British treaty was permitted to expire, by its own limitation; notwithstanding the state of things, which the treaty of Amiens had produced in Europe, was so little like permanent peace, that the occurrence of the fact, on which the force of that limitation depended, might easily have been questioned, with but little violence to the terms, and in per-



fect conformity with its spirit. For this, a renewal of the treaty of 1794, was refused by our cabinet, although proffered by the British government. For this, the treaty of 1807, negotiated by Messrs. Monroe and Pinckney, was rejected. For this, in 1811, fifty thousand dollars were paid out of the public Treasury, to John Henry, for the obvious purpose of enabling the American cabinet, to calumniate their political opponents, on this very point of British influence, upon the eve of elections, occurring in Massachusetts, on the event of which the perpetuation of their own power, was materially dependant. Mr. Speaker, such men as these, never will permit a state of things to pass away, so essential to their influence. Be it peace, or war, arrangement, or hostility, the association of these British antipathies, in the minds of the mass of the community, with the characters of their political opponents, constitutes the great magazine of their power. This composes their whole political larder. It is, like Lord Peter's brown loaf, their "*beef, mutton, veal, venison, partridge, plumb-pudding and custard.*"

From the time of the expiration of the British treaty of 1794, and the refusal to renew it, the American cabinet have been careful, to preceede negociation with some circumstances, or other, calculated to make it fail, or at least to make a successful result, less certain. Thus in 1806, when, from the plunder of our commerce, by British cruizers, a negociation, notwithstanding the obvious reluctance of the cabinet, was forced upon them, by the clamours of the merchants, the non-importation law of April, in that year, was obstruded between the two countries. In the course of the debate, upon that law, it was opposed upon this very ground, that it was an obstacle to a successful negociation. It was advocated, like the bill, now under discussion, as an aid to successful negociation. It was also said by the opponents of that law of 1806, that Great Britain would not negotiate, under its operation, and that arrangement, attempted under proper auspices, could not be difficult; from the known interests, and inclinations of that nation. What was the consequence? Precisely that, which was anticipated. The, then, President of the United States, was necessitated to come to this House, and recommend a suspension, of the operation of that law, upon the openly avowed ground, of its being expedient to give that evidence, of a conciliatory disposition; really because, if permitted to continue in operation, negociation was found to be impracticable. After the suspension of that law, a treaty was formed. The merits of that treaty, it is not within the scope of my present argument, to discuss. It sufficient to say, it was deemed good enough, to receive the sanction of Messrs. Monroe and Pinckney. It is arrived in America, and was rejected by the authority of a single individual; apparently because of the insufficiency of the arrangement about impressment. really, because, a settlement with Great Britain, at that time, did not "enter into the scope of the policy," of the American cabinet. The negociation was, indeed, renewed, but it was, followed up with the enforcement of the non-importation law, and the enactment of the Embargo. Both which steps were stated at the time,

as they proved afterwards, to be of a nature to make hopeless successful negotiation.

In this state the executive power of this nation formally past into new hands, but substantially remained under the old principles of action, and subject to the former influences. It was desirable that a fund of popularity should be acquired for the new administration. Accordingly an arrangement was made with Mr. Erskine, and no questions asked concerning the adequacy of his powers. But lest this circumstance should not defeat the proposed arrangement, a clause was inserted, in the correspondence, containing an insult to the British government offered in the face of the world, such as no man ever gave to a private individual, whom he did not mean to offend. The President of the United States said, in so many words, to the person at the head of that government, that he did not understand what belonged to his own honor, as well as it was understood by the President himself. The effect of such language was natural, it was necessary; it could not but render the British government averse to sanction Erskine's arrangement. The effect was anticipated by Mr. Robert Smith, then acting as secretary of state. He objected to its being inserted, but it was done in the President's own hand writing. As Mr. Erskine's authority was denied by the British government, it is well known that, in fact, on the point of this indignity the fate of that arrangement turned. Can any one doubt that our cabinet meant that it should have this effect? I send you word, Mr. Speaker, "that I have agreed with your messenger, and wish you to ratify it. I think you, however, no gentleman, notwithstanding, and that you do not understand, as well as I, what is due to your own honor"—What think you, sir? Would you ratify such an arrangement, if you could help it? Does a proffer of settlement, connected with such language, look like a disposition, or an intention, to conciliate? I appeal to the common sense of mankind, on the point.

The whole state of the relations, induced between this country and Great Britain, in consequence of our Embargo, and restrictive systems, was, in fact, a standing appeal to the fears of the British cabinet. For, notwithstanding those systems were equal, in their terms, so far as they affected foreign powers, yet their operation was notoriously, almost, wholly upon Great Britain. To yield to that pressure, or do any thing, which should foster, in this country, the idea that it was an effectual weapon of hostility, was nothing more than conceding that she was dependant upon us. A concession, which, when once made by her, was certain to encourage a resort to it by us on every occasion of difficulty between the two nations. Reasoning, therefore, upon the known nature of things, and the plain interests of Great Britain, it was foretold that, during its continuance, she would concede nothing. And the event has justified those predictions. But the circumstance, the most striking, and that furnishing the most conclusive evidence of the indisposition of the American cabinet to peace, and their determination to carry on the war, is that connected with the pretended repeal of the French de-



rees, in November, 1810, and the consequent revival, in 1811, of our restrictive system against Great Britain.

If ever a body of men were pledged to any thing, the American cabinet, its friends, and supporters, were pledged for the truth of this fact, that the French decrees of Berlin and Milan were definitively repealed, as it respects the United States, on the first of November, 1810. If ever any body of men staked their whole stock of reputation upon any point, our cabinet did it on this. They and their partizans asserted, and raved. They denounced every man as a British partizan, who denied it. They declared the restrictive system was revived, by the mere effect of the proclamation. But, lest the courts of law should not be as subservient to their policy, as might be wished, they passed the law of the 2d March, 1811, upon the basis of this repeal, and of its being definitive. The British government refused, however, to recognize the validity of this repeal; and denied, that the Berlin and Milan decrees were repealed on the 1st November, 1810, as our cabinet asserted. Thus, then, stood the argument between the British Ministry and our cabinet. The British Ministry admitted, that, if the Berlin and Milan decrees were repealed on the 1st November, 1810, they were bound to revoke their orders in council. But they denied that repeal to exist. Our cabinet, on the other hand, admitted, that, if the Berlin and Milan decrees were not repealed on the 1st November, 1810, the restrictive system ought not to have been revived against Great Britain. But they asserted that repeal to exist. This was, virtually, the state of the question, between the two countries, on this point. And it is agreed, on all hands, that this refusal of the British government to repeal their orders in council, after the existence of the repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees, as asserted by the American cabinet, was the cause of the declaration of war between the two countries. So that, in truth, the question of the right of war depended upon the existence of that fact; for if that fact did not exist, even the American cabinet did not pretend that, in the position in which things then stood, they had a right to declare war, on account of the continuance of the British orders in council.

Now, what is the truth in relation to this all-important fact, the definitive repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees on the 1st November, 1810; the pivot upon which turned the revival of the restrictive system, and our declaration of war? Why, sir, the event has proved, that, in relation to that fact, the American cabinet was, to say the least, in an error. Bonaparte himself, in a decree, dated the 28th of April 1811, but not promulgated, till a year afterwards, distinctly declares that the Berlin and Milan decrees were not definitively repealed, as relates to the United States, on the 1st Nov. 1810. He, also, declares that they are then, on that 28th of April, for the first time repealed. And he founds the issuing of this decree on the act of the American Congress, of the 2d of March 1811; that very act, which was passed upon the ground of the definitive repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees on the 1st November, 1810; and which,

*it is agreed on all sides, the American government were bound in honor not to pass, except in case of such antecedent repeal!!*

Were ever a body of men so abandoned, in the hour of need, as the American cabinet, in this instance, by Bonaparte? Was ever any body of men so cruelly wounded, in the house of their friend? This,—this was “the unkindest cut of all.” But how was it received by the American cabinet? Surely, they were indignant at this treatment. Surely, the air rings with reproaches upon a man, who has thus made them stake their reputation upon a falsehood; and then gives little less than the lie direct to their assertions. No, sir, nothing of all this is heard from our cabinet. There is a philosophic tameness, that would be remarkable, if it were not, in all cases, affecting Bonaparte, characteristic. All the executive of the United States has found it in his heart to say, in relation to this last decree of Bonaparte, which contradicts his previous allegations and asseverations, is, that “This proceeding is rendered, by the “time and manner of it, liable to many objections”!!!

I have referred to this subject as being, connected with future conduct, strikingly illustrative of the disposition of the American cabinet to carry on the war, and of their intention, if possible, not to make peace. Surely, if any nation had a claim for liberal treatment from another, it was the British nation from the American, after the discovery of the error of the American government, in relation to the repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees, in November, 1819. In consequence of that error, the American cabinet had ruined numbers of our own citizens, who had been caught by the revival of the non intercourse law; they had revived that law against Great Britain under circumstances, which now appeared to have been fallacious; and they had declared war against her on the supposition, that she had refused to repeal her orders in council, after the French decrees were, in fact, revoked; whereas, it now appears, that they were in fact not revoked. Surely the knowledge of this error was followed by an instant, and anxious desire to redress the resulting injury. As the British orders in council were, in fact, revoked, on the knowledge of the existence of the French decree of repeal, surely the American cabinet, at once, extended the hand of friendship, met the British government half way, stopped all further irritation, and strove to place every thing on a basis best suited to promote an amicable adjustment. No, sir, nothing of all this occurred. On the contrary, the question of impressments is made the basis of continuing the war. On this subject a studied fairness of proposition is preserved, accompanied with systematic perseverance in measures of hostility. An armistice was proposed by them. It was refused by us. It was acceded to by the American general on the frontiers. It was rejected by the cabinet. No consideration of the false allegation, on which the war in fact was founded, no consideration of the critical and extremely consequential nature, to both nations, of the subject of impressment, no considerations of humanity, interposed their influence. They renewed hostilities. They rushed upon Canada. Nothing



would satisfy them but blood. The language of their conduct is that of the giant, in the legends of infaney.

Fec, Faw, Fow, Fum,

I smell the blood of an Englishman,

Dead, or alive, I will have some.

Can such men pretend that peace is their object? Whatever may result, the perfect conviction of my mind is, that they have no such intention, and that, if it come, it is contrary both to their hope and expectation.

I would not judge these men severely. But it is my duty to endeavor to judge them truly; and to express, fearlessly, the result of that judgment, whatever it may be. My opinion results from the application of the well known principle of judging concerning men's purposes and motives;—*To consider rather what men do, than what they say;—And to examine their deeds, in connection with predominating passions and interests; and on this basis decide.* In making an estimate of the intentions of these, or any other politicians, I make little, or no account of pacific pretensions. There is a general reluctance at war, and desire of peace, which pervades the great mass of every people, and artful rulers could never keep any nation at war, any length of time, beyond their true interests, without some sacrifice to that general love of peace, which exists in civilized men. Bonaparte himself will tell you, that he is the most pacific creature in the world. He has already declared, by his proclamation to Frenchmen, that he has gone to Moscow for no other end than to cultivate peace, and counteract the Emperor of Russia's desire of war. In this country, where the popular sentiment has so strong an impulse on its affairs, the same obtrusive pretension must inevitably be preserved. No man, or set of men, ever can, or will get this country at war, or continue it long in war, without keeping on hand a stout, round stock of gulling matter. Fair propositions will, always, be made to go hand in hand with offensive acts. And when something is offered, so reasonable that no man can doubt but it will be accepted, at the same moment something will be done, of a nature to embarrass the project, and, if not to defeat, at least to render its acceptance dubious. How this has been, in past time, I have shown. I will now illustrate, what is doing and intended, at present.

As from the uniform tenor of the conduct of the American cabinet, in relation to the British government, I have no belief, that their intention has been to make a solid arrangement with that nation, so, from the evidence of their disposition and intention, existing abroad, and on the table, I have no belief that such is at present their purpose. I cannot, possibly, think otherwise, than that such is not their intention. Let us take the case into common life. I have demands, Mr. Speaker, against you, very just, in their nature, but different, some of recent, others of very old date. The former depending upon principles, very clearly, in my favor. The latter critical, difficult, and dubious, both in principle and settlement. In this state of things, and during your absence, I watch my

opportunity, declare enmity, throw myself upon your children, and servants, and property, which happen to be in my neighbourhood, and do them all the injury I can. While I am doing this, I receive a messenger from you, stating that the grounds of the recent injury are settled; that you comply fully with my terms. Your servants and children, whom I am plundering and killing, invite me to stay my hand until you return; or until some accommodation can take place between us. But, deaf to any such suggestions, I prosecute my intention of injury to the utmost. When there is reason to expect your return, I multiply my means of injury and offence. And no sooner do I hear of your arrival, than I thrust my fist into your face, and say to you, "Well, sir, here are fair propositions of settlement. Come to my terms, which are very just. Settle the old demand in my way, and we will be as good friends as ever." Mr. Speaker, what would be your conduct on such an occasion? Would you be apt to look as much at the nature of the propositions, as at the temper of the assailant? If you did not, at once, return blow for blow, and injury for injury, would you not, at least, take a little time to consider? Would you not tell such an assailant, that you were not to be bullied, nor beaten into any concession? If you settled at all, might you not consider it your duty, in some way to make him feel the consequences of his strange intemperance of passion? For myself, I have no question how a man of spirit ought to act under such circumstances. I have as little, how a great nation, like Great Britain, will act. Now I have no doubt, sir, that the American cabinet view this subject in the same light. They understand well, that, by the declaration of war, the invasion of Canada, the refusal of an armistice, and perseverance in hostilities, after the principal ground of war had been removed, they have wrought the minds of the British cabinet and people to a very high state of irritation. Now is the very moment to get up some grand scheme of pacification; such as may persuade the American people of the inveterate love of our cabinet for peace, and make them acquiescent in their perseverance in hostilities. Accordingly, before the end of the session, a great tub will be thrown out to the whale. Probably, a little while before the spring elections, terms of very fair import will be proffered to Great Britain. Such as, perhaps, six months ago, our cabinet would not have granted, had she solicited them on her knees. Such as, probably, in the opinion of the people of this country, Great Britain ought to accept; such, perhaps, as, in any other state of things, she would have accepted. But such, as I fear, under the irritation, produced by the strange course pursued, by the American cabinet, that nation will not accept. Sir, I do not believe, that our cabinet expect, that they will be accepted. They think the present state of induced passion is sufficient to prevent arrangement. But, to make assurance doubly sure, to take a bond of fate, that arrangement shall not happen, they prepare this bill. A bill, which proposes an augmentation of the army, for the express purpose of conquering the Canadas. A bill, which, connected with the recent disposition evinced by our



cabinet, in relation to those provinces, and with the avowed intent of making their subjugation the means of peace, through the fear to be inspired into Great Britain, is as offensive to the pride of that nation, as can well be imagined; and is, in my apprehension, as sure a guarantee of continued war, as could be given. On these grounds, my mind cannot force itself to any other conclusion than this. that the avowed object of this bill is the true one; that the Canadas are to be invaded the next season; that the war is to be protracted; and that this is the real policy of the American cabinet.

I will now reply to those invitations to "union," which have been so obtrusively urged upon us. If by this call to union is meant, an union, in a project for the invasion of Canada, or for the invasion of East Florida, or for the conquest of any foreign country whatever, either as a means of carrying on this war, or for any other purpose, I answer distinctly;—I will unite with no man, nor any body of men, for any such purposes. I think such projects criminal, in the highest degree, and ruinous to the prosperity of these states. But, if by this invitation is meant union, in preparation for defence, strictly so called; union, in fortifying our seaboard; union, in putting our cities into a state of safety; union, in raising such a military force as shall be sufficient, with the local militia, in the hands, of the constitutional leaders, the executives of the states, to give a rational degree of security, against any invasion, sufficient to defend our frontiers, sufficient to awe into silence the Indian tribes, within our territories; union, in creating such a maritime force, as shall command the seas, on the American coasts, and keep open the intercourse, at least between the states;—if this is meant, I have no hesitation: union, on such principles, you shall have from me, cordially, and faithfully.—And this, too, sir, without any reference to the state of my opinion, in relation to the justice, or the necessity of this war. Because, I well understand, such to be the condition of man, in a social compact, that he must partake of the fate of the society, to which he belongs, and must submit to the privations and sacrifices, its defence requires, notwithstanding these may be the result of the vices, or crimes, of its immediate rulers. But there is a great difference between supporting such rulers in plans of necessary self-defence, on which the safety of our altars and fire-sides essentially depends, and supporting them in projects of foreign invasion, and encouraging them in schemes of conquest and ambition, which are not only unjust in themselves, but dreadful in their consequences; inasmuch as, let the particular project result as it may, the general effect must be, according to human view, destructive to our own domestic liberties and constitution. I speak as an individual. Sir, for my single self, did I support such projects, as are avowed to be the objects of this bill, I should deem myself a traitor to my country. Were I even to aid them, by loan, or in any other way, I should consider myself a partaker in the guilt of the purpose. But, when these projects of invasion shall be abandoned; when men yield up schemes, which, not only openly contemplate the raising of a great military

force, but also the concentrating them at one point, and placing them in one hand; schemes obviously, ruinous to the fates of a free republic, as they comprehend the means, by which such have ever, heretofore, been destroyed;—when, I say, such schemes shall be abandoned, and the wishes of the cabinet limited to mere defence, and frontier and maritime protection, there will be no need of calls to union. For such objects there is not, there cannot be, but one heart and soul in this people.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that while I utter these things, a thousand tongues, and a thousand pens, are preparing, without doors, to overwhelm me, if possible, by their pestiferous gall. Already, I hear, in the air, the sound of—“*traitor*”—“*British agent*”—“*British gold*,”—and all those charges of vulgar calumny, by which the imaginations of the mass of men, are affected; and by which they are prevented, from listening to what is true, and receiving what is reasonable.

Mr. Speaker, it well becomes any man, standing in the presence of such a nation as this, to speak of himself seldom; and such a man as I am, it becomes to speak of himself, not at all; except, indeed, when the relations, in which he stands to his country, are little known, and when the assertion of those relations, has some connexion, and may have some influence, on interests, which it is peculiarly incumbent upon him to support.

Under this sanction, I say,—it is not for a man, whose ancestors have been planted, in this country, now, for almost two centuries; it is not for a man, who has a family, and friends, and character, and children, and a deep stake in the soil; it is not for a man, who is self-conscious of being rooted in that soil, as deeply, and as exclusively, as the oak, which shoots among its rocks; it is not for such a man to hesitate, or swerve a hair's breadth from his country's purpose, and true interests, because of the yelpings, the howlings, and snarlings of that hungry pack, which, corrupt men, keep, directly, or indirectly, in pay, with the view of hunting down every man, who dare develop their purposes; a pack, composed, it is true, of some native curs, but for the most part, of hounds and spaniels, of very recent importation, whose backs are seared by the lash; and whose necks are sore, with the collars, of their former masters. In fulfilling his duty, the lover of his country, must often be obliged to breast the shock of calumny. If called to that service, he will meet the exigency, with the same firmness, as, should another occasion call, he would breast the shock of battle. No, sir, I am not to be deterred by such apprehensions. May heaven so deal with me, and mine, as I am true, or faithless, to the best interests of this people! May it deal with me, according to its just judgments, when I fail to bring men and measures, to the bar of public opinion; and to expose, projects and systems of policy, which I realize to be ruinous to the peace, prosperity, and liberties of my country!



This leads me, naturally, to the third and last point of view, at which I proposed to consider this bill; *as a means for the advancement of the objects of the personal, or local ambition of the members of the American cabinet.* With respect to the members of that cabinet, I may, almost literally, say, I know nothing of them, except as public men. Against them, I have no personal animosity. I know little of them, in private life; and that little never made me ambitious to know more. I look at them as public men, wielding powers, and putting in operation means and instruments, materially affecting the interests and prospects of the United States.

It is a curious fact, but no less true than curious, that for these twelve years past, the whole affairs of this country have been managed, and its fortunes reversed, under the influence of a cabinet, little less than despotic; composed, to all efficient purposes, of *two Virginians and a foreigner.* When I speak of these men, as Virginians, I mean to cast no odium upon that state, as though it were not entitled to its full share of influence in the national councils; nor when I refer to one of them, as being a foreigner, do I intend, thereby, to suggest any connexions of a nature, unworthy, or suspicious. I refer to these circumstances, as general and undoubted facts, which belong to the characters of the cabinet, and which cannot fail to be taken into view in all estimates of plans and projects, so long as man is constituted as he is, and so long as the prejudices and principles of childhood never fail to influence, in different degrees, in even the best men, the course of thinking and action of their riper years.

I might have said, perhaps, with more strict propriety, that it was a cabinet composed of *three Virginians and a foreigner*; because, once, in the course of the twelve years, there has been a change of one of the characters. But, sir, that change was, notoriously, matter of form rather than substance. As it respects the cabinet, the principles continued the same; the interests the same; the objects, at which it aimed, the same.

I said that this cabinet had been, during these twelve years, little less than despotic. This fact, also, is notorious. During this whole period, the measures, distinctly recommended, have been adopted by the two houses of Congress, with as much uniformity and with as little modification, too, as the measures of the British ministry have been adopted, during the same period, by the British parliament. The connection between cabinet councils and parliamentary acts is just as intimate, in the one country, as in the other.

I said that these three men constituted, to all efficient purposes, the whole cabinet. This, also, is notorious. It is true, that, during this period, other individuals have been called into the cabinet. But they were all of them, comparatively, minor men; such as had no great weight, either of personal talents, or of personal influence, to support them. They were

kept as instruments of the master spirits. And when they failed to answer the purpose, or became restive, they were sacrificed, or provided for. The shades were made to play upon the curtain. They entered. They bowed to the audience. They did what they were bidden. They said what was set down for them. When those who pulled the wires saw fit, they passed away. No man knew why they entered. No man knew why they departed. No man could tell whence they came. No man asked whither they were gone.

From this uniform composition of the cabinet, it is obvious that the project of the master spirits was that of essential influence within the cabinet. For, in such a country as ours, so extended, and its interests so implicated, it is impossible but those who would conduct its affairs wisely, and with a single eye to the public good, should strive to call around themselves, the highest and most independent talents in the nation ; at least of their own political friends. When this is not the case, it must be apparent, that the leading influences want not associates, but instruments. The same principle applies to the distribution of office, out of the cabinet, as to filling places within it. Some mistakes may be expected to happen, in selections among candidates for appointments at a distance. But, if at any time a cabinet shall be systematically guided, in such selection, by a regard not to merit, or qualifications, but to electioneering services ; if the obvious design be to reward partizans, and encourage defection to its party standard, then the people may rest assured, that the project such cabinet has in view, is, not to serve the public interest, but to secure their personal influence ; and that they want, not competency for the employment, but subserviency in it. How this matter is, I shall not assert ; not because I have not very distinct opinions upon the subject ; but because the sphere of appointment is too extensive to be comprehended, in the grasp of a single individual ; and I mean to make no assertion, concerning motive or conduct, of which there does not exist, in my mind, evidence as well complete, as conclusive. I refer to this subject, therefore, only as a collateral and corroborative proof of the purposes of the cabinet. Every man can decide for himself, in his own circle, or neighbourhood, concerning the apparent principle, upon which the cabinet have proceeded, in making appointments ; remembering, always, that the section of country, against whose prosperity the policy of the cabinet is, most systematically, levelled, will be that, in which subserviency to all its purposes will be, most studiously, inculcated among its adherents. It will be in that quarter, that the flames of party animosity will be enkindled, with the most sedulous assiduity, as the means of making men forgetful of their true interests, and obedient to their employers, in spite of their natural prejudices and inclinations.

It is natural to inquire, what are the projects connected



with a cabinet, thus composed, and to what ends it is advancing. To answer this question, it is necessary to look into the nature and relations of things. Here the true criterions of judgment are to be found, Professions are, always, plausible. Why, sir, Bonaparte, himself, is the very milk of human kindness; he is the greatest lover of his species in the world; he would not hurt a sparrow, if you take his own account of the matter. What, then, do nature, and the relations of things teach? They teach this, that the great hazard, in a government where the chief Magistracy is elective, is from *the local ambition of states, and the personal ambition of individuals*. It is no reflection upon any state, to say, it is ambitious. According to their opportunities and temptations, all states are ambitious. This quality is as much predicable of states, as of individuals. Indeed state ambition has its root in the same passions of human nature, and derives its strength from the same nutriment, as personal ambition. All history shows, that such passions always exist among states, combined in confederacies. To deny it, is to deceive ourselves. It has existed, it does exist, and always must exist. In our political relations, as in our personal, we then walk most safely, when we walk with reference to the actual existence of things; admit the weaknesses, and do not hide from ourselves the dangers, to which our nature is exposed. Whatever is true, let us confess. Nations, as well as individuals, are only safe, in proportion as they attain *self-knowledge*, and regulate their conduct by it.

What fact, upon this point, does our own experience present? It presents this striking one;—that, taking the years, for which the Presidential chair is already filled, into the account, *out of twenty eight years, since our constitution was established, the single state of Virginia has furnished the President for twenty four years*. And, farther, it is now as distinctly known, and familiarly talked about, in this city and vicinity, who is the destined successor of the present President, after the expiration of his ensuing term, and known, that he, too, is to be a Virginian, as it was known and familiarly talked about, during the Presidency of Mr. Jefferson, that the present President was to be his successor. And the former was, and the latter is, a subject of as much notoriety, and, to human appearance, of as much certainty too, as who will be the successor to the British crown, is a matter of notoriety in that country. To secure this succession, and keep it in the destined line, has been, is, and will continue to be, the main object of the policy of these men. *This is the point, on which the projects of the cabinet for the three years past have been brought to bear,—that James the first should be made to continue four years longer. And this is the point, on which the projects of the cabinet will be brought to bear for the three years to come,—that James the second shall be made to succeed, according to the fundamental rescripts of the Monticellian dynasty, and secure*

Mr. Quincy was, here, again called to order. The Speaker said, that really the gentleman laid his premises so remote from his conclusions, that he could not see how his observations applied to the bill.

Mr. Quincy proceeded. On the contrary, sir, I maintain that both my premises and conclusions, are very proximate to each other; and intimately connected with the bill on the table; and with the welfare of this people.

Is it not within the scope of just debate to show, that the general policy of the cabinet, and that also this particular project have for their object the aggrandizement of the cabinet themselves; or some member of it? If this be the object of the bill, is it not proper to be exhibited? The topic may be of a nature, high and critical, but no man can deny, that it is both important and relevant. To secure the power they at present possess, to perpetuate it in their own hands, and to transfer it to their selected favourites, is the great project of the policy of the members of our cabinet. It would be easy to trace to this master passion the declaration of war, at the time, and under the circumstances, in which it occurred. Antecedent to the declaration of war, it was distinctly stated, by individuals from that quarter of the country, under the influences of which this war was adopted, *that the support of the present President of the United States, by their quarter of the country, depended upon the fact of the cabinet's coming up to the point of war with Great Britain.* This state of things, and the knowledge of it by the members of the cabinet, was, repeatedly, urged, in conversation, by members of this and the other branch of the Legislature, to shake the incredulity, in a declaration of war, which at that time existed in some of our minds. Without placing any reliance on the reports of that day, this I assert, unequivocally, and without fear of contradiction, that such were the passions, which existed in the southern and western states, and such the avowed determination to war, that had not the cabinet come up to that point, its influence, in those quarters, was at an end. Without their support, the re-election of the present Chief Magistrate was hopeless. Now, sir, when continuance of power is put into the scale, as, in this instance, it was, unquestionably, it is not for human nature to deny, that it had not a material influence in determining the balance. For myself, I have never had but one opinion on this matter, I have never doubted that we should not have had war declared, at the last session, if the Presidential election had not been depending.

Just so, with respect to the invasion of Canada. It was, in my judgment, a test, required by the state of opinion, in the southern and western states, of the sincerity of the cabinet; and of its heartiness in the prosecution of this war. This accounts for the strange and headlong haste, and the want of sufficient preparation, with which the invasion was expedited.



This accounts for the neglect to meet the proposition for an armistice when made by the Governor of Canada, after a knowledge of the revocation of the orders in council. This accounts for the obtrusive attempts to gain a footing in Canada, and the obstinate perseverance in the show of invasion, until the members of the electoral colleges had been definitively selected; since which event, our armies have been quiet enough. When I see a direct dependence between the perpetuation of power in any hand, and the adoption of, and the perseverance in, any particular course of measures, I cannot refrain from believing that such a course has been suggested and regulated by so obvious and weighty an interest. This subject is capable of much greater elucidation. But, according to your suggestion, sir, I shall confine myself to trace the connection of the master passion of the cabinet with the bill now under consideration.

The projects of the cabinet, for the present year, are loans, to the amount, at least, of twenty millions; an army of fifty five thousand men; a grand scheme of pacification, founded on some legislative acts, or resolves; and a perpetuation of the war. The loans are expected to be filled, partly from the popularity derived, in the commercial cities, by the vote for building seventy-fours; partly by opening offices, for receiving subscriptions in the interior. Whatever is received will be diverted to the army service. The grand scheme of pacification will be made to appear very fair, in terms, but, in the state of irritation, which has been produced in Great Britain, by the continuance of the war, after the repeal of the orders in council, and by the pertinacious perseverance, in the threats and preparation to invade Canada, will, it is expected, be rejected by her. This, it is supposed, will give popularity to the war in this country. The forty dollars bounty will, it is hoped, fill the ranks. The army, for the conquest of Canada, will be raised, to be commanded by whom? This is the critical question. The answer is in every man's mouth. *By a member of the American cabinet; by one of the three;—by one of that "trio;"—who at this moment constitute in fact, and who, efficiently, have always constituted, the whole cabinet.* And the man, who is thus intended for the command of the greatest army this new world ever contained, an army, nearly twice as great as was, at any time, the regular army of our revolution, I say, the man, who is intended for this great trust, is the individual, who is, notoriously, the selected candidate for the next Presidency.

Mr. Speaker, when I assert that the present Secretary of State, who is now acting Secretary of War, is destined, by a cabinet, of which he himself constitutes one third, for the command of this army, I know that I assert intentions to exist, which have not yet developed themselves by an official avowal. The truth is, the moment for an official avowal has not yet come. The cabinet must work along by degrees, and only shew their cards

as they play them. The army must, first, be authorized. The bill for the new Major Generals must be passed. Then, upon their plan, it will be found necessary to constitute a *Lieutenant General*. "And who so proper," the cabinet will exclaim, "as one of ourselves?" "And, who so proper as one of the cabinet?" all its retainers will respond from one end of the continent to the other. I would, willingly, have postponed any animadversion upon this intention of the cabinet, until it should have been avowed. But, then, it would have been too late. Then, the fifty thousand men would have been authorised, and the necessity, for a Lieutenant-General, inevitable. Sir, I know very well, that this public animadversion may, possibly, stagger the cabinet in its purpose. They may not like to proceed in the design, after the public eye has been directed, distinctly, upon it. And the existence of it will be denied, and its partizans will assert that this suggestion was mere surmise. Be it so. It is, comparatively, of little importance, what happens to my person or character, provided this great evil can be averted from my country. I consider the raising such an army as this, and the putting it under the command of that individual, taking into view his connection with the present cabinet, so ominous to the liberties of this country, that I am not anxious what happens to me, if by any constitutional responsibility I can prevent it.

However, to the end that it may not be thought I have made this assertion lightly, I will, briefly, state the evidence, upon which it is founded, and which, to my mind, has given perfect satisfaction of the intentions of the cabinet.

First. As long ago as last June, it was, to my knowledge, asserted by individuals, connected with the administration, in this and the other branch of the legislature, that it was the intention of the American cabinet to place the Secretary of State at the head of the army.

Second. This intention was, early in the present session, distinctly avowed by members, in this and the other branch of the legislature, to be the intention of the cabinet. And these members, were persons intimate with the cabinet, and connected with them in politics; and of all men, the most likely to know their intentions.—This can be proved, if denied. But it will not be. I do not believe there is a man on this floor, who is not acquainted with the fact, as well as myself.

Third. As soon as the session opened, the old Secretary at war was hunted down.

Fourth. The burden of the whole department of war is, now, transferred to the shoulders of the Secretary of State. This great and oppressive trust, which, at the last session, it was seriously urged, no single, living wight could bear, but that it required *three persons* to support its pressure, is, now, cast solely upon this individual, who, it seems, is able to uphold the mighty mountain of that department in one hand, while he balances the department of state in the other.



Fifth. The Secretary of State has not, merely, entered into a still life possession of the department of war. He is actively employed in arranging its details, and putting it into a state of preparation. This work of drudgery, it can hardly be expected, that any man would undertake, for the sake of an unknown successor, unless he had, himself, some prospect of interest in it.

Sixth. The Secretary of State is no sooner in procession of the department of war, than the plan of a great army, an efficient pecuniary bounty, and a brilliant campaign, against Canada, is promulgated. Of all which he is the known author; having communicated, to the committee on military affairs, the whole project, not only in general, but in its details. Above all, that no doubt, concerning the ultimate purpose, may exist,

Seventh. Immediately after the Secretary of State enters upon the duties of Secretary at War, he puts to Adjutant General Cushing this question: "How many major generals and brigadiers are necessary for an army of thirty five thousand men?" Now, as this question was put by authority, and was intended to be communicated to congress, and was in its nature very simple, one would have supposed, that it would have been enough, in all conscience, to have given to it a direct answer. Besides, it is not always thought proper for those who are in the under grades of departments, when one question is proposed, to enter into the discussion of another. However, notwithstanding these obvious suggestions, one half of the whole reply of General Cushing is taken up in investigating not the question, which was asked, but the question on which the honest Adjutant, in the simplicity of his soul, tells the Secretary, "*You have not required my opinion.*" The whole of this part of the letter runs thus:—

"In this country we have never had a grade between the commander in chief and that of major general; hence it was found necessary, in the "*continental army*," to give to the senior major-general the command of the right wing, and to the next in rank that of the left; which, from the limited number of general officers, often left a division to a brigadier, a brigade to a colonel, and a regiment to a subordinate field officer; but *in Europe this difficulty is obviated by the appointment of general officers of higher grades.*"

"From the best information I have been able to obtain on this subject, I have no hesitation in saying, that eight major-generals, and sixteen brigadiers, to command the divisions and brigades of *an army of thirty five thousand men*, is the lowest estimate which the uniform practice of France, Russia and England, will warrant, and that this is much below the proportion of officers of these grades actually employed in the army of the revolution."

"*As you have not required my opinion, whether it be necessary to have a higher grade than that of major-general, I have not*

*deemed it proper to touch this subject, and have confined myself to the number of major-generals and brigadiers, deemed necessary to command the divisions and brigades of an army of thirty-five thousand men. It may not, however, be improper to remark, that if it is intended to have no higher grade than that of major-general, their number should be increased to eleven; so as to give one for the chief command, one for each wing, and one for each division of four thousand men."*

It is entertaining to see, how much trouble the worthy Adjutant takes to impress upon the mind, that the Secretary of State "*had not required his opinion,*" on the subject of a grade higher than that of a major-general. He even goes so far as to say, that he has "*not deemed it proper to touch this subject.*"

Now, sir, I think he has touched the subject, and treated it pretty thoroughly too. For he has shewn, not only that it is "difficult" to do without, but that it is more economical to have a grade higher than a major-general. And this too, in an army of only *thirty-five thousand men*. But when this bill passes, the army will consist of *fifty-five thousand*. The result is, then, inevitable, you must have, in such case, a grade higher than a major-general; in other words, a lieutenant-general. Such, it cannot be denied, is the intention of the cabinet. As little can it be denied, that the Secretary of State, the acting Secretary of war, is the cabinet candidate for that office. So it has been distinctly avowed by the friends and confidants of that cabinet; and as such, I have no question, is known by every individual in this house.

Mr. Speaker, what an astonishing, and alarming state of things is this! Three men, who efficiently have had the command of this nation, for many years, have so managed its concerns, as to reduce it, from an unexampled height of prosperity, to a state of great depression—not to say ruin. They have annihilated its commerce, and involved it in war. And now the result of the whole matter is, that they are about to raise an army of fifty-five thousand men, invest one of their own body with this most solemn command, and he, the man, who is the destined candidate for the President's chair! What a grasp at power is this! What is there in history equal to it! Can any man doubt, what will be the result of this project? No man can believe that the conquest of Canada will be effected in one campaign. It cost the British six years to acquire it, when it was far weaker than at present. It cannot be hoped that we can acquire it under three or four years. And what, then, will be the situation of this army and our country? Why then, the army will be veteran; and the leader, a candidate for the presidency! And whoever is a candidate for the presidency, with an army of thirty thousand veterans at his heels, will not be likely to be troubled with rivals, or to concern himself about votes. A President elected under such auspices, may be nominally a President for years; but really, if he pleases, a President for life.



I know that all this will seem wild and fantastical to very many, perhaps to all, who hear me. To my mind, it is neither the one nor the other. History is full of events, less probable, and effected by armies far inferior to that, which is proposed to be raised. So far from deeming it mere fancy, I consider it absolutely certain, if this army be once raised, organized, and enter upon a successful career of conquest. The result of such a power as this, entrusted to a single individual, in the present state of parties and passions in this country, no man can anticipate. There is no other means of absolute safety, but denying it altogether.

I cannot forget, Mr. Speaker, that the sphere, in which this great army is destined to operate, is in the neighbourhood of that section of country, where it is probable, in case the present destructive measures be continued in operation, the most unanimous opposition will exist to a perpetuation of power in the present hand ; or to its transfer to its destined successor. I cannot forget, that it has been distinctly avowed by a member on this floor, a gentleman from Virginia too, (Mr. Clay) and one very likely to know the views of the cabinet, that *"one object of this army was to put down opposition."*

Sir, the greatness of this project, and its consequences, overwhelm my mind. I know very well, to what obloquy I expose myself by this developement. I know that it is, always, an unpardonable sin, to pull the veil from the party deities of the day ; and that it is of a nature not to be forgiven, either by them, or their worshippers. I have not willingly, nor without long reflection, taken upon myself this responsibility. But it has been forced upon me by an imperious sense of duty. If the people of the Northern and Eastern states are destined to be hewers of wood and drawers of water to men, who know nothing about their interests, and care nothing about them, I am clear of the great transgression. If, in common with their countrymen, my children are destined to be slaves, and to yoke in with negroes, chained to the car of a Southern master, they, at least, shall have this sweet consciousness as the consolation of their condition—they shall be able to say—"OUR FATHER WAS GUILTLESS OF THESE CHAINS."























